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HAND DELIVERED

Ms. Ernesta B. Barnes  
Regional Administrator  
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
Region 10  
1200 Sixth Avenue  
Seattle, Washington 98101

Re: Focused Feasibility Study for Surface Cleanup of the  
Western Processing Site

Dear Ms. Barnes:

I am one of the attorneys representing Standard Equipment, Inc., the owner of the property to the immediate west and south of the Western Processing Waste Treatment Facility. On June 5, 1984, the EPA released a document entitled "Focused Feasibility Study for Surface Cleanup" ("Study") which outlined the EPA's first phase of the cleanup plan for the Western Processing site. This letter constitutes Standard's comments regarding the Study.

These comments are submitted even though the EPA's news release of June 19 suggests that comments on the Study may be moot. Apparently, the EPA and some of the potentially responsible parties have reached a tentative agreement on a surface cleanup plan which would be implemented in lieu of the EPA plan discussed in the Study. However, in the eventuality that the tentative agreement is not finalized, Standard submits the following comments.

To begin with, Standard believes that the process through which the EPA has solicited public comments on the Study has been unreasonable. Standard only received a copy of the Study on June 7, exactly four days before the public meeting in the Kent City Council Chambers. Obviously, four days is an insufficient time period in which to seriously analyze and comment on a plan of this nature. Despite the time limitations, I attended the meeting and attempted to voice Standard's concerns and comments on the Study. At the meeting I was surprised to learn that there were to be no more public meetings on phase I of the EPA's cleanup. Given the

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superficiality of the information contained in the Study, and the abbreviated period between release of the Study and the Kent public meeting, Standard believes that it is imperative that the EPA schedule a second public meeting once the EPA chooses among the various alternatives mentioned in the Study and after additional details are released by the government.

Following the public meeting in Kent, we submitted the Study to toxic waste disposal experts for analysis. They concluded that the EPA's Study was incomplete in scope and superficial in its analysis. I summarize their comments below.

First, the EPA has stated that the surface cleanup is only the first phase of the overall cleanup process. However, the master plan for the overall cleanup has not been divulged to the public, and apparently has not even been developed by the EPA. Consequently, it is impossible for the public to determine whether this first phase will be consistent with the overall master plan for site cleanup.

Second, the EPA appears to be railroading phase I of the cleanup through the development and approval process. The Study is only the first step in the development of the surface cleanup plan. At some point, the EPA must select among the alternatives listed in the Study. Then it must prepare a detailed conceptual design of the alternatives chosen. Finally, it must prepare bid documents and accept bids for the work. Standard shares the desire of the EPA to proceed with this cleanup as quickly as possible, however, by collapsing or eliminating these important steps in the development of a cleanup plan, the EPA may be doing more harm than good. The Study itself mentions a forthcoming memorandum entitled "Detailed Analysis/Conceptual Design" which purportedly will analyze the alternatives in greater detail. For any public input into this process to be at all meaningful, the EPA must allow the public to comment on this more detailed plan. The Study as presented is so conclusory that it is almost impossible to comment on it in any detail.

Third, the Study fails to present any meaningful analysis of the risks associated with each suggested remedial alternative. Below are listed some of the important questions which are completely ignored by the Study:

1. What toxic and/or odorous emissions to the air will be created by waste handling/treatment on site?
2. What methods will be used to control air emissions?

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3. What methods will be used to monitor air contamination levels, and what criteria will be used to require curtailment of remedial activities to protect on-and off-site personnel?
4. What emergency action will be taken should a fire occur on site, and who will coordinate notification and evacuation of adjacent parties?
5. How will trucks hauling waste away from the site be decontaminated so that waste isn't spread through the community?
6. What routes will waste hauling trucks take and what provisions will be made to respond to spills, breakdowns, accidents, etc.?

The EPA might be creating grave risks to the community if it proceeds with its surface cleanup without proper safety and contingency plans. If such plans have been developed, then it is crucial that the public be allowed to analyze and comment on them.

Fourth, the Study fails to analyze whether or not the surface cleanup as proposed is, in fact, the appropriate first step to take in the cleanup process. The EPA's own test data indicates that the ground water is continuing to carry contaminants far off site onto the surrounding properties, and possibly even into the deep aquifer. Each delay in dealing with this problem simply allows these deadly contaminants to further spread throughout the community. Furthermore, the Study makes no mention of how surface water will be managed during the cleanup process. Any surface water which is allowed to pond on the site may increase the driving force for the spread of contamination through the ground waters to surrounding property.

Finally, the EPA admits that it may have to halt all cleanup in the middle of the plan if the costs exceed the initial allocation of \$5,000,000.00. The Study offers no analysis of the risks represented by a partially completed plan. Neither does the Study suggest contingencies for dealing with funding shortfalls or delays in obtaining further funds.

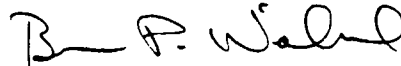
Standard wishes to emphasize that, like all members of the Kent community, it is desirous of seeing the cleanup proceed as rapidly as possible. However, an ill-conceived and rushed surface cleanup may create more hazards than it remedies. It is imperative that the EPA provide the public with a complete and detailed analysis of any cleanup prior to

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implementation. Such an analysis should include an assessment of the risks to the community, the surrounding property owners and the environment in general. Furthermore, phase I of the cleanup must be an integrated part of the complete cleanup process. A phase I cleanup plan which is rushed through without adequate analysis may be politically expedient, but it could be a blue print for disaster.

If the court should reject the proposed generator plan, and the EPA elects to return to the approach outlined in the Study, then please consider this letter a demand by Standard that the EPA release a detailed analysis of the cleanup plan, complete with safety and contingency plans, and allow for sufficient further public comment before work begins.

Very truly yours,



Bruce P. Weiland

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cc: Judi Schwarz  
Standard Equipment, Inc.